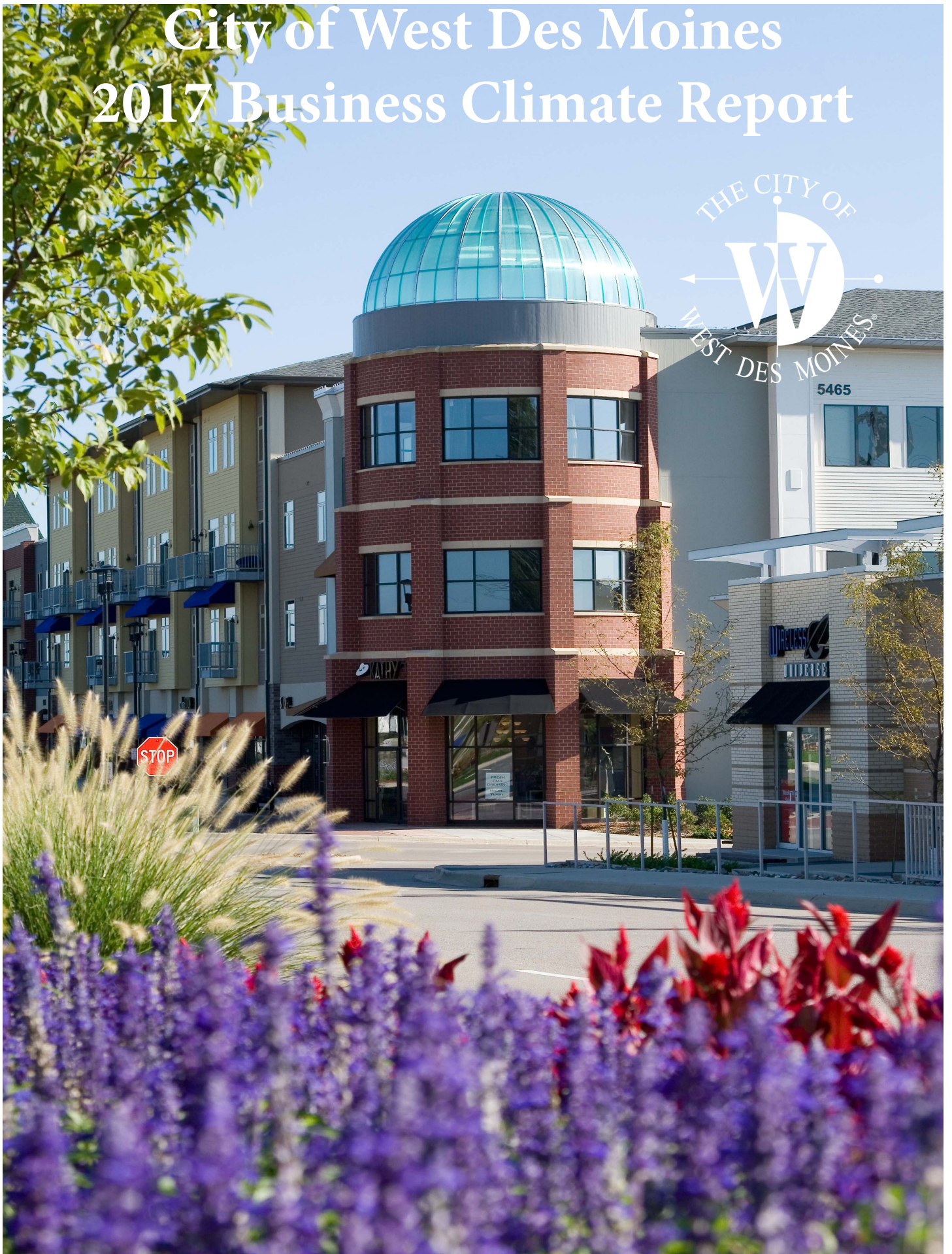


City of West Des Moines 2017 Business Climate Report





Population: 64,560
Daytime Population: 126,612
Unemployment Rate: 2.3%

Sources: 2016-2017 West Des Moines
Development Retrospective
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Go West
WEST DES MOINES

The Executive Call Program

For more than 20 years, the City of West Des Moines has participated in the Executive Call Program along with the Greater Des Moines Partnership and West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce. The primary tool of the program is a confidential survey of business owners and executives used to identify and promote strengths of running a business in West Des Moines. The survey also helps define and alleviate any weaknesses of operating a business in West Des Moines. Survey results are aggregated into a complete data set that is used to create this annual publication.

Additionally, the program serves the purpose of building a friendly, professional, and beneficial rapport among the business community, City of West Des Moines, West Des Moines Chamber and the Greater Des Moines Partnership.

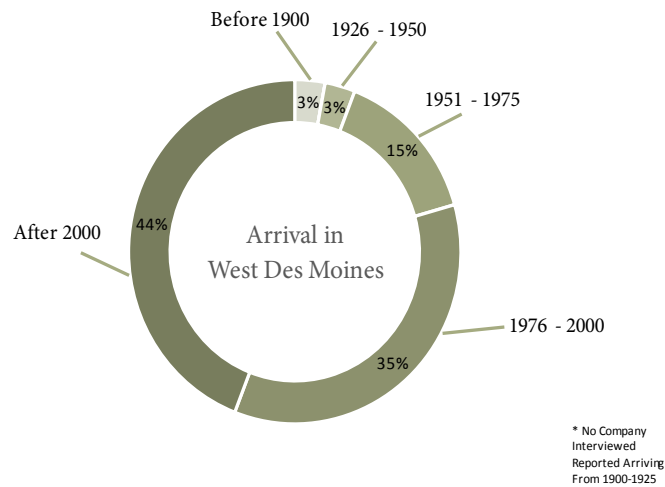
In 2017, 68 businesses participated in the Executive Call Program. This sample is representative of all the key industries in West Des Moines, which includes large, small, new, and long-established businesses.

We would like to extend our appreciation to those businesses and thank them for volunteering their time to participate in the Executive Call Program. A list of all 68 participating businesses can be found on page 8 of this document.

If you have any questions about the Executive Call Program, or if your business would like to participate, please call the City of West Des Moines Department of Community & Economic Development at (515) 273-0770.

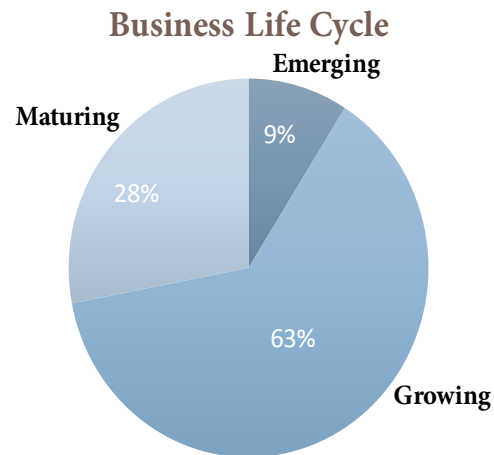
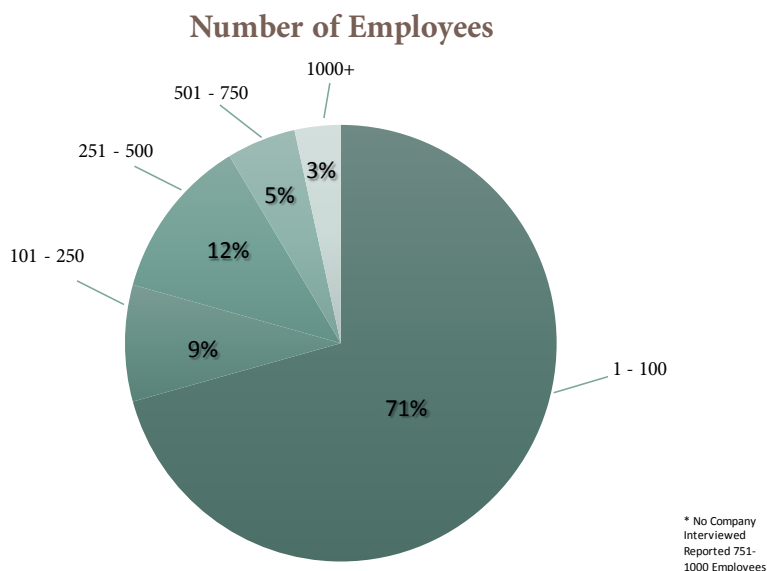


Executive Call Program Company Profiles



West Des Moines is known for having long and beneficial relationships with our resident businesses. Fifty-six percent of responding businesses have been in operation for at least 17 years. Twenty-one percent of responding businesses have been running for more than 42 years.

The majority of businesses surveyed are small but growing. Seventy-one percent of businesses have 100 or fewer employees. Sixty-three percent say they are growing, 9% are emerging, and 28% are maturing. No businesses reported to be in a stage of decline.



Large businesses with more than 500 employees only accounted for 8% of those surveyed.

West Des Moines Businesses Thrive on Innovation

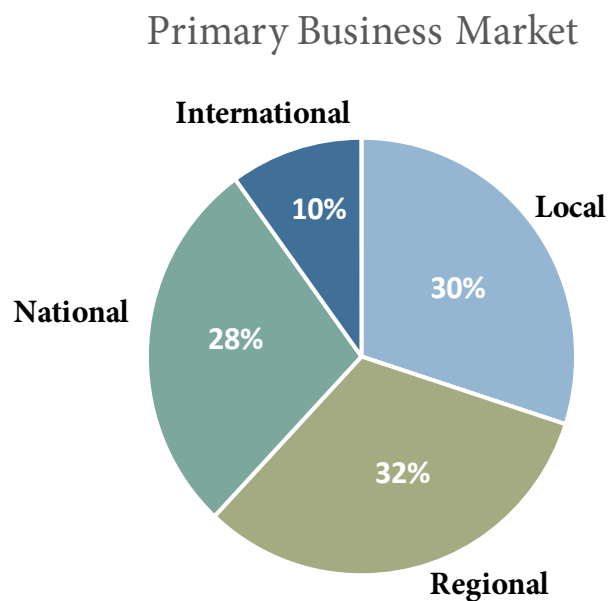
One important reason for the growth and success of West Des Moines' business community is the presence of innovation and ingenuity. Seventy-six percent of businesses say they've introduced new products or services in the past five years.

Additionally, our businesses have the foresight to look toward the future and recognize the trends of tomorrow. Sixty-eight percent of responding businesses plan to introduce new products or services in the next 24 months.

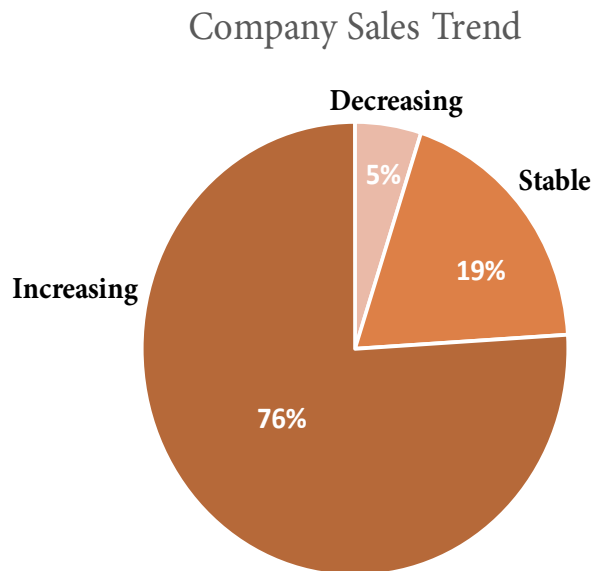
Plus, 69% of businesses intend to expand in the next three years. Ninety-three percent of businesses don't believe there are any barriers to business growth in West Des Moines. Ninety percent of businesses would consider West Des Moines as a place to expand operations.

When asked to rate some of the community's strengths, businesses most often answered by praising West Des Moines' location, positive business climate, quality of life, and transportation system. Some noted areas of improvement needed in the community include a perceived poor infrastructure system and a lack of skilled laborers.

As our businesses continue to expand, many have an eye on a larger marketplace for their goods and services. Of all respondents, 30% say they focus mainly on local business.

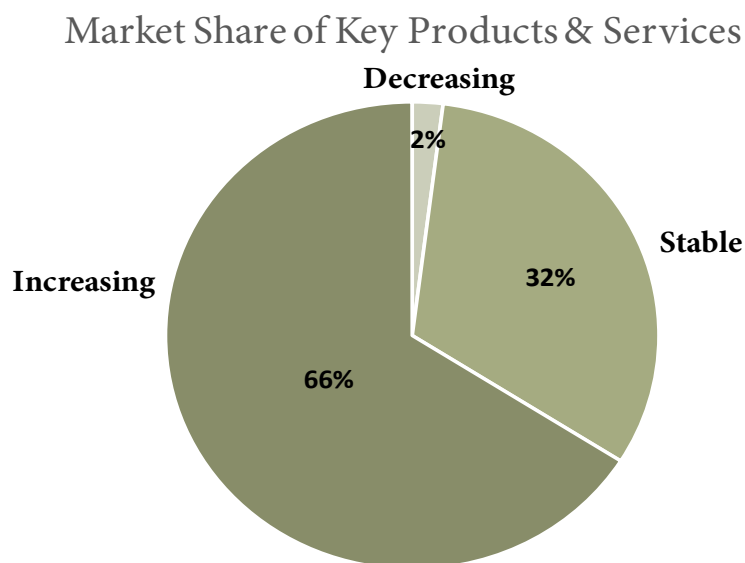


West Des Moines Businesses are Competitive



With 76% of respondents reporting increased sales in 2017, this relates to a sign of prosperity in the marketplace and a competitive edge held by West Des Moines businesses.

Along with additional sales revenue, two-thirds of businesses say their product's market share is increasing. Only 2% of local businesses reported losing market share in 2017.



Workforce Traits

In addition to measuring the growth and success of West Des Moines' business climate, the Executive Call Program has companies rank the availability, quality, stability and productivity of the regional workforce on a scale of 1 through 7, with 1 being the lowest and 7 being the highest.

Workforce Availability

With a low metro unemployment rate of 2.3%¹, workforce availability is by far the lowest ranking workforce trait. Responding companies ranked workforce availability with an average score of 4.68. In addition, 65% of businesses reported having trouble recruiting certain positions. Difficulty recruiting scientific or technical-related positions and production labor accounted for 61% of all recruitment challenges in 2017. The workforce availability rating of 4.68 in West Des Moines is an improvement over the statewide average of 3.77.

Workforce Quality

The businesses in West Des Moines ranked workforce quality at an average of 5.64. To further increase the quality of the local labor force, 62% of businesses say they have made an increased investment in employee training. No businesses report decreasing employee training. Our workforce quality rating is substantially higher than the statewide average of 4.72.

Workforce Stability

The businesses in West Des Moines ranked workforce stability at an average of 5.75. Only four businesses rated workforce stability with a score of 3.0 or lower. Our total is greater than the state average rating of 5.16.

Workforce Productivity

Workforce productivity is the highest-rated trait in West Des Moines with a score of 6.09. More than 80% of respondents rated productivity with a rating of 6.0 or higher, and only one measured productivity with a 4.0 or lower. Our workforce productivity score is once again greater than the statewide average of 5.54.

¹United States Bureau of Labor. (2017). Economy at a Glance.

Utility Service & Quality

Quality utility infrastructure serves as the foundation of any community in providing an affordable and reliable place to live and do business. Once again, businesses used the 1 through 7 scale to rate their satisfaction with local utility services:

Utility	2016 Score	2017 Score	Difference
Water	6.26	6.58	+.32
Sewer	6.27	6.69	+.42
Natural Gas	6.29	6.68	+.39
Electricity	6.31	6.53	+.22
Telecom (Voice)	6.02	6.16	+.14
Cellular	6.20	6.33	+.13
Internet Access	5.58	5.84	+.26
Internet Speed	4.00	4.00	+.00

Overall, many of the utilities had similar scores from 2016 to 2017. All but one utility saw an increase in its score from 2016 to 2017.

Community Service Satisfaction

Businesses were asked to rank services offered in the community and greater metro area on a scale of 1 through 7:

Service	2016 Score	2017 Score	Difference
Police Protection	6.66	6.76	+.10
Fire Protection	6.83	6.73	-.10
Ambulance	6.83	6.83	+.00
Healthcare Services	6.56	6.59	+.03
Childcare	6.06	6.28	+.22
Schools (K-12)	6.50	6.51	+.01
Community College	6.47	6.69	+.22
Regional Universities	6.43	6.54	+.11
Public Transportation	4.88	5.34	+.46
Traffic Control	6.15	6.20	+.05
Local Streets and Roads	6.36	6.40	+.04
State and Federal Highways	6.34	6.44	+.10
Airline Passenger Service	5.47	5.20	-.27
Property Tax Assessment	5.85	5.83	-.02
Zoning Changes and Permits	6.20	6.32	+.12
Regulatory Enforcement	6.35	6.32	-.03

As the table shows, the vast majority of community services saw an increase in their scores from 2016 to 2017. Significant improvements occurred in public transportation, community college services, childcare services, zoning and permit changes, regional university services, police protection, and state and federal highways.

Thank You!

The City of West Des Moines would like to extend another ‘thank you’ to the 68 businesses who volunteered their time and resources in 2017 to participate in the Executive Call Program. The information gathered from their surveys is a crucial part of the City’s efforts to create local employment and to maintain and expand our tax base.

Alzheimer’s Association
American Management Resources, Ltd.
Assessment Services, Inc.
Asset Pros
Athene USA
Aureon
Auto-Owners Insurance Company
Ballet Des Moines
Barker Lemar Companies
Beacon Hill Staffing Group
BKD, LLP
Career Resources Group
Check-All Valve Manufacturing Co.
Commercial Appraisers of Iowa, Inc.
Cook Plumbing Corporation
Corell Contractor, Inc.
Des Moines Embassy Club West
Educational Resource Associates, Inc.
EmbarkIT, Inc.
Farmers National Company
FBL Financial Group, Inc.
Financial Care Professionals L.C.
Financial Partners Group
Financial Plus Credit Union, Inc.
Fiserv, Inc.
Foster Group, Inc.
Fox Brewing
Full Circle Child Development
GuideOne Insurance
Hanser & Associates
Helena Chemical Company
Hirsh Industries LLC
Illuminated Marketing & Development
Innovative Injection Technologies, Inc.

Insight Wealth Group
Iowa Student Loan
Iowa Wealth Management
J.B. Hunt Transport, Inc.
Kingston Life and Health
Meals from the Heartland
Microsoft
Midwest Project Partners (now Aureon Consulting)
Newbury Management Company
Northwestern Mutual
OutcomesMTM
Performance Marketing
QCI
Ramco Innovations, Inc.
Sammons Financial Group
Screenscape Studios
Shive-Hattery
Solar Transport
Speck USA
State Public Policy Group
Strategic America
Telligen
Ten Square International, Inc.
The Concept Works
The IMT Group
The Travelers Companies, Inc.
The Vroman Group, LLP
TrueNorth Companies LLC
U.S. Commodities, Inc.
UTC Aerospace Systems
Vivid Impressions/Pay-LESS Office Products, Inc.
Wells Fargo Card Services
Windsor Windows & Doors
Zirous, Inc.



Mayor & City Council

Mayor: Steven K. Gaer

Councilmember - 1st Ward: Kevin Trevillyan

Councilmember - 2nd Ward: John Mickelson

Councilmember - 3rd Ward: Russ Trimble

Councilmember - At Large: Renee Hardman

Councilmember - At Large: Jim Sandager

City Manager's Office

City Manager: Tom Hadden

Deputy City Manager: Jamie Letzring

www.wdm.iowa.gov

(515) 222-3600



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